1,001 Memories

by Penn aka Twinnie #2

When I first began writing the daily memories for Patti, I did not make rough drafts. It was only after writing #9 that I decided to at least keep a rough draft of each since this would be a long project. My goal, as I told Dick Blide, is to write 1,001 memories. That is a goodly number and should keep all of us alive for awhile, writing and reading.

The first memory was "Jump Rope Chants". Memory #2 is the real introduction to the project. My motivation is: 1] to keep Patti alive; 2] to keep Dick alive; 3] to miraculously bring back to Patti's brain some inkling of our memories together: 22 years, and more after marriage.

My stimulus? Since I was finished with the almost-5 year project of writing regarding Nick's legal trials and tribulations with the Bad School District, I had to have a new goal, something that involved just me, what I always wanted to do: e.g., play piano by ear. Music is a fascinating language and one that requires both muscle memory and some kind of an "ear" and it makes me happy to make my fingers "talk".

One goal, then, was to re-start at the piano, since I have <u>two</u> keyboards: the free electric Clavinova from Patti and Dick when they moved from Kalama, WA, and the player piano in the living room. I was also motivated since Zachary had played Patti and Dick's Clavinova one time in Kalama, WA. They were blown away and raved about it to me. Zachary is apparently our singular family musical piano master and plays by ear.

I began to play at the keyboard(s) 9-10 pm each day after Fred went to bed. He says, "Don't close the door; I like to hear the music." This faithful practice was suddenly interrupted on March 18, 2020 when I cracked a rib while losing balance and falling to the pavers while gardening at Nick's. Now I am at least three weeks healed, thank goodness. Also, COVID-19 came along.

So currently I've concentrated on turning out the memories. Writing and exercise are on my daily list. Since I cannot swim during COVID, I walk. Writing daily is a challenge over time. I don't want to repeat, so I keep the titles listed and from #10 on to #66 this weekend, I also have the rough drafts. I leave one Memory out for the mail-person every day except Sunday. Fred helps a lot in remembering Mother and Daddy and Mike, Pete, Patti activities.

I need a "schedule" and "jobs" daily as Mother raised us. So I also consider the Memory as a "job". I find the more I think back, the more I recall. Deeper and deeper we go.

Memory #1

<u>Jump Rope Chants</u>

Dear Twinnie #1,

Remember school days when we live at 3807 Van Ness Street, Washington, DC and attend Phoebe Hearst Elementary School?

We <u>love</u> to jump rope. We can do it <u>all</u> – single jumps or "double-dutch" where two rope turners use both hands and turn two ropes at once. Then the jumper jumps in!

We chant:

"Jelly on the plate
Jelly on the plate
Wibble Wobble
Wibble Wobble

Jelly on the plate"

Our favorite jump rope chant goes:

"I had a little brother
His name was Tiny Tim
I put him in the bathtub
To teach him how to swim
He drank up all the water
He ate up all the soap
He died the next morning
With a bubble in his throat"

Mother vetoed this chant because we had a little brother (named Michael). We should have changed "died" to "burped".

Memory #2

Dear Twinnie,

Here's another memory for you: First we were wombmates for nine long months. We shared space inside Mother, floated around, kicked, sucked our thumbs and grew together into full-fledged babies.

On April 9, 1936, we entered this world. You, the Brave twin, led the way, headfirst into a new environment of oxygen. I missed you immediately and had to follow. But I got confused and came out buns first – called a breech birth. It worked out O.K. because you had paved the way with 5 pounds of babyhood. I was smaller, 4 pounds.

The hospital personnel put us both in incubators for awhile with extra oxygen. Soon we were home in Mother's happy arms. Mother had her hands full, nursing two wiggling, yelling infants. Daddy was wandering around the hospital wondering if the boy twins at the hospital were his or not.

It was good to be alive and in a good family – Mother, age 30 and Daddy age 40. Little did we realize all the adventures that were to come! Lucky us!

Memory # 3

Dear Twinnie Forever,

Our Mother used her hard working creative fingers to make us pinafores and blouses etc. from first tearing apart Daddy's old uniforms and scraps of material. We took turns standing patiently while she pinned a pattern on us. I can still recall her busy hands tucking, pinning here and there, while holding a fan of pins in her teeth.

But a couple of things mother got us to wear made us Twinnies complain and whine. We hated wearing **union suits** – one piece button-down underwear. What bother! Plus Ruthie Murray at school showed her pretty underwear while hanging upside down from the playground monkey bars. We didn't dare display our yucky undergarments. Too

embarrassing.

Then there were the "**elf socks**" as Mother named them. Besides looking odd, they kept slipping down into our shoes. Maybe elves wore pointed socks but they didn't help 9 year olds to play hopscotch or jump rope. Remember?

Memory #4

Dear Twinnie:

Remember back – We're 10 years old. Mother takes us to weekly YWCA swim lessons in Washington DC. We two twinnies cannot swim.

The indoor pool water is chilly. We grasp onto the pool edge wearing red-wool bathing suits and listen to the instructor. Each one of us must jump into the water at the deep end and make it to the pole the instructor is holding in the water.

I am *terrified* that if I jump I will sink down, down, down, never to come up. But Twinnie #1 (you) is not afraid. She thinks this is <u>fun</u>. So she jumps, pops back up, and everyone claps.

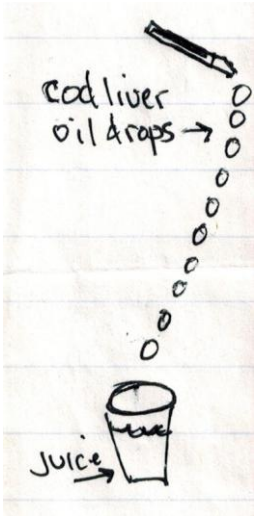
Eventually Twinnie #2 (me) jumps, pops back up and everyone claps. I guarantee there is <u>no</u> way I would have without you bravely jumping first – with <u>no fear</u> – and showing that everything is all right.

Mother and the Twinnies celebrate! We eat lunch in the upstairs cafeteria. We save our leftover bread to feed the park pigeons across the street. Then we visit a bookstore for our reward gift: a big book called the <u>Jolly Jump-Up Family</u>.

Memory # 5

Dear Twinnie #1,

Mother was a cook and fed five children over the years: Barbara, Mike, Pete, and we Twinnies. When mother made beef stew, she poured in a mountain of wheat germ "to ward off colds and coughs". We <u>hated</u> wheat germ; other times we liked the gravy taste and called it "candy stew". That made Mother smile.



Each day after school we Twinnies had to drink a glassful of juice. In wintertime we dropped in 10 drops of cod liver oil. In summertime we dropped in 5 drops. We <u>hated</u> the cod-liver oil taste so we pinched our noses shut when we drank juice.

Other UN-favorites were Mother's (burned) liver. It was a cheap cut of meat. Same with cow's tongue. I still recall the strong taste. "You mean this tongue came from a cow's mouth?" we asked. "Ugh!"

When we ate a bowl of cereal, Mother would encourage, "Finish the bowl and find a surprise at the bottom" – Behold, a bouquet of blue flowers painted on the bottom.

Mother kept colas, cookies, and cakes out of the house. No wonder we kids never got fat.

Memory #6

Dear Twinnie #1,

We were juniors in high school, 16 or 17. This is the only time our father "spanked" us. The punishment was orchestrated by Mother who insisted that Daddy whack us for taking part in what the newspaper called a Rice Riot, complete with a front-page "bird's eye" view photo of a crowd of kids.

Mother feared Daddy could lose his job with Cameron Iron by negative publicity although no names were listed and the fuzzy crowd photo could have been me – or not.

Daddy took us separately (clothed) into our bedroom. The victim-twin faced away from him and upon instruction, bent over. Weapon in hand (his cane? I don't recall). He stated firmly, "This is going to hurt me more than it will hurt you."

I don't recall if you howled or not or how many whacks sounded – 3? 4? 5? 6? When it was my turn, I think I yelled because it would make Daddy feel "job accomplished". But underneath I was angry and felt the whole thing was undeserved. Nevertheless the rule, "no more slumber parties" was ordained.

Memory # 7

Dear Twinnie #1,

Our first experience at "camp" was Rock Creek Park Day Camp in Washington D.C. We were eight or nine and traveled by ourselves on the bus. Took along lunch in lunchpails.

Rock Creek Park was big, beautiful and hilly with trails and trees and shade. We sat on big logs arranged into a huge circle and sang loud songs like "John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith" and "Catalina Magdalena Hootensteiner Wallentimer Hogan Logan Bogan was her name-name-name".

Then off to activities like crafts where we made lanyards which required braiding plastic strips. Maybe you remember more.

Upon our return home in early afternoon, Mother was always there.

About age 11 we attended our first overnight camp named Camp Kahlert, a YMCA camp in Maryland. There we swam in muddy waters of the Chesapeake Bay, lived in log cabins with bunk beds and used outdoor bathrooms called outhouses – smelly! In swimming we made it out to Third Float – a large floating green platform for "elite" swimmers and with lifeguards.

Once you dived off Third Float and hit a sunken log underwater. You reappeared, groggy above the surface with a bloody shoulder and dazed look. The lifeguard pulled you out, thanks to God. Barnacles on the sunken log caused the injury.

The camp nurse did not do stitches and just bandaged the wound. This left debris in the wound which later caused pain when swimming. Later in life you had surgery to clean the area which left an impressive scar which resembled a strap – (like on a dress).

Even later in life at age 25, you had surgery to remove a lipoma (fatty benign growth)

from your other shoulder. You said, "Good, now I have matching scars." What a wonderful cheerful Twinnie you are!

Memory #8

Dear Twinnie,

We tried out for the Spring Fling talent show during 8th grade at Warren Central High School, (grades 7-12).

We twinnies practiced our try-out song, "Chattanooga Shoe-Shine Boy." We loved the rhythm and sang with gusto.

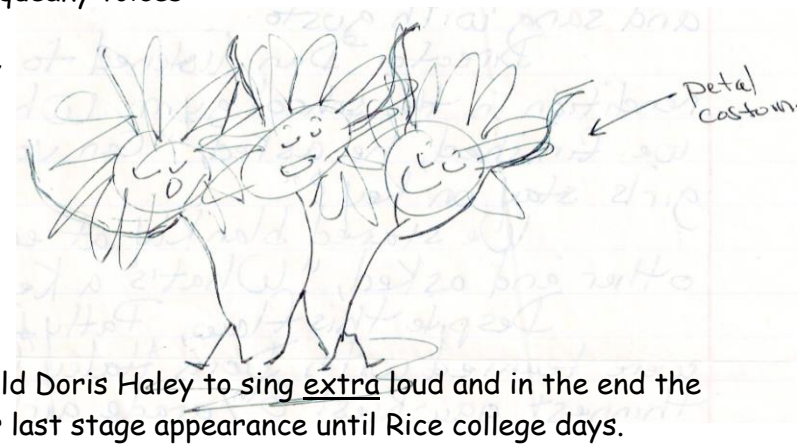
Director Dan listened to our rendition in the school gym. When we finished, he asked, "Can you girls stay on key?"

We stared blankly at each other and asked "What's a Key?"

Despite this flaw, Patty & Penny were teamed with Doris Haley (tallest thinnest gawkiest 8th grade girl who could sing on key) as daisies!

Our costumes included flower petals around our faces. We moved as a group with raised arms, twirled and sang in high squeaky voices:

"Daisies won't tell, dear,
Come, kiss me, do
Tell me you love me.
Say you'll be true
And I will promise
Always to be
Tender and faithful
Sweetheart to thee".



The band played loudly. We told Doris Haley to sing extra loud and in the end the audience clapped! That was our last stage appearance until Rice college days.

Memory # 9

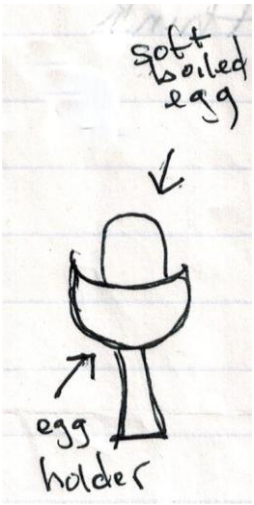
Dear Twinnie #1,

Granddaddy came to visit from Nebraska ! It was a rare treat. We lived at 3807 Van Ness Street in Washington D.C. in a duplex. One wall away lived two grown-up sisters who argued a lot.

We twinnies were five or six. It was Christmastime. Granddaddy (Daddy's dad) had white, white hair and wore a quiet smile. Mother cooked him coddled eggs every morning which she carefully placed into an egg holder on his plate.

Granddaddy cracked open the soft shell with a knife, then spooned out the eggy liquid into a bowl before eating it. He ate neatly and used his cloth napkin like a bib. We named them, "Granddaddy eggs."

On Christmas morning Granddaddy handed us each a large shoe box. Inside was a fuzzy "sleepy doll" with a zip-up back pocket for storing p.j.s.



One doll was pink; one doll was blue.

As twinnies do, we argued in front of Granddaddy, both wanting the blue (or was it the pink?) doll.

Mother was horrified at our non-manners and that we were not appreciative of Granddaddy's gifts. He stayed quiet – not knowing what to do. Mother snatched up both dolls to put away in her closet until we came to our senses.

To this day, Twinnie, I think we both prefer blue.

Memory # 10

Dear Twinnie #1

On the bulletin board of Miss Williams' fourth grade room at Phoebe Hearst Elementary School in Washington, D.C. where our fingers laboriously copied from the chalkboard Longfellow's epic poem, "Hiawatha" day after day as handwriting practice, was a newspaper photo and stories by us!

At Mother's instruction, we twinnies each wrote an account of our visit to Mr. and Mrs. White's farm in Herndon, Virginia the summer of 1945 that World War II ended. We were nine years old.

It was an exciting time at the farm. There was a whole new world of sights (baby kittens), sounds (Sarge the dog barking) and smells (manure in the cow yard).

The pungent manure where heifers stood shocked our nostrils. Eric, Mr. and Mrs. White's son, thought it was funny that we didn't know the difference between a heifer and a cow.

We walked under the grape arbor where green grapes grow above and around us on an overhead trellis.

We walked across the fields with Eric and Angela (another boarder who wanted to be a movie star) to a muddy "swimming hole" where it was lucky we didn't drown.

We watched Mrs. White kill a chicken (hen) for dinner by first chopping off its head with a hatchet. Now headless and with blood spurting everywhere, the chicken body raced around the yard – wings widespread – until finally dropping.

Next, Mrs. White plunged the body into boiling water and began plucking out the feathers. When we later sat down to dinner her fried chicken and corn were delicious.

You, Twinnie had to return home before me because you ate too much corn, resulting in a stomach ache. Later you told me when you and Mother were in downtown Washington D.C. for an eye-doctor appointment, you got to experience crowds and parades – everyone hugging and kissing each other because World War II had just ended and everyone was happy.

This meant that soon Daddy would return home from the war and we could stop smashing cans and saving newspapers and squishy packets of Oleo and coloring to make butter for the war effort.

Memory # 11

Tonsils out

Dear Twinnie #1,

We twinnies had a "tonsilectomy" at 5 years old. We had our tonsils cut out because Mother thought this would mean less colds and coughs for us.

That belief is no longer followed so the Twinnies' kids (Alex for you and Andy & Nick for me) got to keep their tonsils.

On my back on the operating table the doctor said, "Count backwards from 100"... as a strange smelling cloth was placed gently over my face. The smell was called "ether". I was worried. No one had ever asked me to count backwards before. "100 – 99 – 98 ..." is as far as I got.

We woke up in cribs next to each other. My throat was killing me. I couldn't swallow. I looked over to the next crib and saw Twinnie! You were talking and eating a bowl of ice cream. I got some too. So good! It took the throat pain away.

In both cribs were a fuzzy bear with a red bow. They were special. We loved our bears.

Memory # 12
Schoolmates

Dear Twinnie #1,

Our schoolmates at Phoebe Hearst Elementary School in Washington, D.C. are wonderful friends from our past.

We loved to walk to school with Marcia Fowler. Her older sister was Indiabell. Adam Briggs lived around the corner. He smiled and was soft-spoken (he became a car salesman).

Our one fat schoolmate was Freddy Bilbry. His rich grandmother, who wore a fox fur around her neck, took Freddy to warm Florida every winter. Harry Daley, tall and skinny, talked like someone was pinching his nose closed. He explained that the nasal sound was caused by a problem with his adenoids.

Two smart and short schoolmates were David Radue and John Bresnahan. Lou Divers, who lived in the apartments, and I got to wash the teachers' lunch dishes in the teachers' lounge. Their leftovers looked so good and mouth-watering!

Jules Laventhal, with freckles and close-cropped reddish-brown hair and blue eyes, cried on the playground during recess because the kids circled him yelling, "You're a Jew!" He wiped tears from his eyes with fists. We twinnies didn't know why he was crying and they were making Jules upset.

We ran home and asked Mother, "What's a Jew?"

Mother was *furious*. "Jews are people like anyone else. Those children are wrong to make fun of Jules." We later learned that Hitler of Germany, along with Japan, caused World War II and acted like Jews were non-people. He was wrong and evil.

Our sixth grade teacher, Mrs. Dodge, gave us twinnies a good-bye party at school when we moved to Indianapolis, Indiana. She wrote "BON VOYAGE" across the chalkboard but we didn't know what those French words meant. (Good Travels).

I can see Mrs. Dodge with short hair and steel-gray curls. She wears a pink sweater and

grey pencil-shaped skirt. She stands against the open classroom door, ankles crossed, and reads verses from the Holy Bible. My favorite, even today is the 23rd song by David: "The Lord is my shepherd – I shall not want. He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake. Yea, though I walk in the valley and the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil for thou art with me. Thy rod and staff comfort me... "

Memory # 13
Billy's balls

Dear Twinnie # 1,

"Esme! Esme Campbell! Can you come out and play?"

We twinnies would yell and call up to the tall apartment building across the street and down the block from our house at 3807 Van Ness Street in Washington D.C.

Esme, about five floors up, would hear us, raise up a window, lean out and yell back, "I'm coming!" Sometimes she would bring her little brother, Billy (3 or 4 years old) with her. We girls were about five or six.

We played jump rope or hopscotch in front of our home. Esme explained that boys look different than girls with pants pulled down.

She said if we wanted to see Billy's "parts", then Billy would want to see our "parts". Inquisitive, we somehow uncomfortably agreed.

On the second day in our small side yard under the cover of bushes, Esme yanked down Billy's pants. There he stood, exposed.

What? What was all that paraphernalia? Scrotum – balls – penis. It was shocking to our senses.

Just then, Esme demanded that we now pull down our pants. Luckily, watchful Mother called from the nearby window. "Girls, Mother says to come in now".

We raced inside, leaving Esme and Billy out in the cold and that was the end of that.

Memory # 14
Best citizen

Dear Twinnie # 1,

For some reason we made lots of friends at Warren Central High School, 7 - 12 grades in Indianapolis, Indiana.

We took turns as President of the Sunbeams (girls only) in 8th grade. All the kids in 8th grade voted for "Best Citizen", and guess what? We won! They said it was a one vote difference so they called it a tie.

I asked you, "Who did you vote for?" You answered, "You."

You asked me, "Who did you vote for?" I said "Me."

So that's why I won by one vote

At the school assembly in the gym they called us both up to the podium and gave us 1

(one) medal. Four hands took one medal. We tried not to be "snatchy."

Why in the world didn't they give us <u>both</u> a medal – or why not just cut the medal into two parts? After all, we are two people!

I considered myself the winner because, like in a swimming race, I had one more (greedy) vote.

Mother and Daddy tried to get us to share the one medal. I placed the medal on my bulletin board at the end of my bed. Did I promise to share it after 6 months? I doubt it.

The moral to this story is that if you're in a contest, try to win – vote for yourself – or suffer the consequences.

I hope, Twinnie #1, that you don't consider this to be a sad story. In the end, you, Twinnie #1 turned out to be the model of a Best Citizen, period.

Memory #15
<u>Washington Monument Spit</u>

Dear Twinnie #1,

Mother saw to it that her twinnies went places and did things. Mother didn't drive. Daddy was away at war (WW II). So mother hired drivers to take us places.

One place was the big Girl Scout Rally on the spacious grounds of the Washington Monument. We learned that the founder of the Girl Scouts, Lady Mountbatten, would be there and speak.

Multiple groups of Brownies and Girl Scouts dotted the green lawns of the historic Washington Monument that day. The weather was clear and sunny.

But what I really remember from that afternoon is that we twinnies decided to go into the Washington Monument building itself with a plan to climb <u>all</u> the stairs to the very tip-top.

How exciting! In our uniforms we entered the building and began the daunting ascent. It was a long, long way to the top. We didn't really know how far we had to go.

We ran up levels of concrete stairs with railings, pausing at landings where we would stop and look way way down to admire our progress.

Time passed... More steps, more landings, more leaning over to see how far we'd gone / come.

Suddenly you (or I) had the brilliant idea to mark our labors and spit downward from each landing to determine how high we'd come in our quest.

Therefore, at each successive landing we would stop, spit vigorously, stare down and watch the velocity of the spit shrink smaller and smaller in its downward path. We would tilt our heads hoping to hear the splash landing of spit but it falls so far and so fast that our ears hear nothing. More stairs – stop – stare and admire – more spit.

Finally we Twinnies make it to the very top of the Washington Monument. Mission accomplished! We showed a lot of spirit – and spit!

Memory #16

Dear Twinnie #1,

At 3807 Van Ness Street in Washington DC we had a wooden porch and steps leading down into a small backyard where colorful, fall flowers called "hollyhocks" stood alongside an unused garage that bordered an alley.

We had a swing set and a small "hill" for sledding in winter leading from the front yard.

One day you yelled to Mother, "Mother, a strange man just walked into the house!"

As you reported this scarey news, I ran and hid behind the couch but peeked over to take a look.

I saw a man wearing a khaki uniform walking across the room. Daddy had come home on "leave" from the Navy.

It was wartime (World War II). Family saved their smashed cans and bundled up newspapers to help the war effort. Everything was "rationed" like food and gasoline.

We were 5 or 6 years old. My eyes saw a uniformed man with a smiley face.

He spotted me in my hiding place and walked toward the couch, talking and laughing.

I could tell by his kind face that he was a nice man. My instincts told me he would not hurt me. So I came out from behind the couch to join you and Daddy.

As a result of Daddy's visit during wartime, in 9 months time we Twinnies had a new baby brother Michael.

Mother strung a wire across our big bedroom and hung up a black oil cloth curtain. Mother came in regularly to feed and change the new baby who cried a lot.

She built a huge play pan outside in the front yard with a sandbox, toys, etc. We twinnies play hopscotch in front and watched Michael who was a happy toddler and loved to eat ice cream cones.

Memory #17

Meow!

Dear Twinnie #1,

Mother had a "thing" for cats. Did she like cats or hate cats? Mother could draw one thing. Her cat artwork looked like this:

We Twinnies remember mother using her art skills to help younger brother Mike create a scrapbook. It was shaped like a cat!

He entered a contest sponsored by the Tail Waggers Club. Mike won the contest thanks in part to Mother's drawing skills.

First prize was a live "Blue Persian" kitten. Suddenly we had a kitten running around our modest living room at 3807 Van Ness Street in Washington D.C. The terrified kitten attempted to escape by jumping onto the drapes and clawing itself up-up-up.

We watched, transfixed, not knowing what to do. Mother determined that the Blue Persian kitten was "crazy" and demanded that the Tail Waggers Club take it back. Guess what? The club gave Mike a second kitten.

Guess what, again? Kitten #2 also clawed itself up the drapes – doing what normal kittens do.

Goodbye to Kitten #2 in short order.

That explains why we kids had **ZERO** cats while growing up. If a stray cat dared to meow at our back door, mother would immediately pour a bucket of water drenching the shocked feline. It would race away, never to return.

To this day Twinnie #2 (me) has never had a kitten for a pet. Yet Twinnie #1 (you) and Dick have had cats.

One of your cat stories is that Dick would lay out your 2 vitamin pills for the morning – but they seemed to keep disappearing before you could take them. Finally, you both discovered that your cat ate the laid-out vitamins. The cat loved vitamin pills!

Pardon me, now. It's time for my daily cat nap.

Memory #18
Typing

Dear Twinnie #1,

One of the best things Mother did for us kids was to force us to learn to touch type at age 12. Her method? Cover all the typewriter keys with blank caps. In other words, we had to type blind.

To start, we twinnies typed "`f-j-space, f-j-space`" daily before we could go out to play at the Naval Gun Factory in Washington, D.C. Mother insisted that the typed lines be perfect. No easy task.

Although typing was frustrating work, we loved to play with friends like Mary Edson next door so we worked hard building muscle-memory into our pounding fingers.

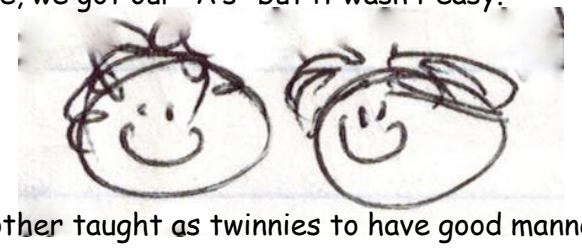
By age fifteen at Lamar High School in Houston, Texas, we took Typing class, expecting an easy "A". But our teacher, Miss Rowzee, dressed in a black tent, ran the show like

military boot camp.

Her meaty forearms hung loosely from a bulbous neck that supported a triple chin and above which rested a small pinched nose highlighted by eyes protruding from a face of fat and squashed like two upside down "U's". To say Miss Rowzee was "a force to reckon with" is an understatement.

Her drill-sergeant approach, nonstop foghorn voice, bellowed out instructions loud and clear. It penetrated our ears while her dinosaur frame plodded up and down the classwroom aisles as she demanded non-stop perfection and precision.

In the end, Twinnie, we got our "A's" but it wasn't easy.



Memory #19
Manners

Dear Twinnie #1,

Remember how mother taught as twinnies to have good manners at the dinner table? (when we were in elementary school).

Mother had us eat with bibs and off trays at the dinner table. Once we learned to eat without slopping and spilling, she would allow us to eat at the dinner table with no bibs, no trays.

I like to eat (stuffing my face) fast so I could be the first to reach for "seconds" on meat. And I often talked with my mouth full of food. And I reached across the table to grab this or that instead of asking politely, "Please pass the chicken." Then there was the problem of guzzling (chug-alugging) down our milk too fast.

Eventually though, we earned the right to eat with no bibs or trays.

As teenagers at Camp Stonycroft in Shelby, Michigan, the camp staff encouraged good manners by announcing that the etiquette expert, Emily Post, was coming to visit the Camp. Each table wanted to win the prize so we all worked on passing around plates politely, and pouring milk carefully from the big pitcher with no spills and using napkins to wipe up the food dribbles from our chins.

The day arrived for the highly-anticipated Emily Post visit. The screen door of the dining hall opened and a camp counselor carried in a large wooden post dressed as a female wering a "Emily Post" sign and paraded it around the dining hall tables.

Bummer. The joke was on us.

Now that we are older and in our 80s, we can do as we please. Fred and Penn, Twinnie #2, use paper towels for napkins! We eat lunch and dinner from trays we carry into the TV room and eat anyway we want!

Actually Fred, is a neat and slow eater. Penn eats fast and still talks with her mouth full.

What about Dick and Twinnie #1?

Memory #20
Cigarettes

Dear Twinnie #1,

While we lived in Houston Texas and attended Lamar High School, then Rice Institute (now University), the first sound from our parents' bedroom that we heard every morning was the familiar click of Daddy's silver cigarette lighter as he lit up for the first smoke of the day.

Cigarettes in the morning – liquor at night. Here is the true story of how daddy trained his twin daughters to smoke.

We twinnies were 15. The family was sitting at the dinner table. After eating, Daddy leaned back in his chair, pulled out his pack of cigarettes, thumped the pack a couple of times, then took out a Lucky Strike to light up.

He laid the pack on the table and took out his cigarette lighter. Then he picked up the open pack and offered a cigarette to each twinnie.

Mother went berserk, "*Allan*!" she exclaimed in alarm.

"Tsh, tsh, Missy. I know what I'm doing."

Finally. We twinnies were treated like grown-ups! We gingerly but eagerly reached for the offered smokes as Daddy contrived his nonstop instruction.

"Hold the cigarette like this. Place it "so" between your lips. Now I'm going to give you a light."

As Daddy lit each cigarette with a practiced hand, he continued, "Now this is how you inhale – you girls are swimmers – you know how to inhale. Inhale deeply – then blow out. I'll demonstrate."

Daddy, who can blow his successive smoke rings, took a long, long draw on his own cigarette and blew out smoke.

We twinnies copied him. Immediately, we began choking and coughing. Our noses clogged. Our parched throat burned. Leaning forward, our spasmodic convulsions continued.

Cigarette smoking wasn't as much fun as it looked. Besides, don't they say that "smoking stunts your growth"? Cigarettes don't even smell good plus they taste terrible. To heck with smoking – why waste our small but precious $25 per month allowance on cigarettes?

Despite Daddy's inveterate smoking and drinking, he lived to 86½. His memorable smoking "lesson" was lovingly instructed and helps his twinnies – even today – to live long and longer.

New Memories: This is a wonderful photograph of Daddy and his children which I had not seen before. I finally found Uncle Hobert, hidden among Daddy and his progeny. It appears that we are in the backyard of our Quarters "A" residence at NOPI and I think the year has to be when Patti and I are 13 or 14, judging from my bangs which I cut during eighth grade. Possibly 1949. Patti and I are wearing identical outfits. It was at age 14 that we stopped wearing identical outfits when Patti put her Twinnie #1 foot down and said, "No more!"
The hedge in the back of the picture limits the end of our backyard. Beyond that hedge is an expanse of beautiful gardens and more circular hedges with white rose bushes ending up at the public sidewalk down the slightly sloped hill. It appears that we are all looking at Uncle Hobert's watch. It looks like the rattan furniture has been pulled out from the small patio and I see that Uncle Hobert's feet are up on the table that has also been pulled out.